

# NABLC Safety Advisor

October 2004



## Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day

Drive as if your life depends on it.

### What is "Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day?"

■ A national initiative that focuses on reducing the number of tragic fatalities on U.S. roadways by improving our roadways, our vehicles, and basic driver behavior.

■ A day that involves all individuals, public and private agencies/organizations in one common goal: achieving zero traffic fatalities.

■ Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day is held on **October 10** each year.

**5,575 people have lost their lives on Virginia roadways in the past six years...**

### What will you do?

#### Safety Tips

As drivers and pedestrians, we all want to reach our destinations safely. Here are some tips from the US DOT Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration campaign, "Share the Road Safely" on doing exactly that.

#### Car Drivers

- \* Cutting in front can cut your life short! Avoid cutting in front of other vehicles as you may create an emergency braking situation for others around you, especially in heavy traffic.
- \* Buckle your seat belt! ALWAYS!
- \* Watch your blind spots and the "No Zones" around trucks and buses.
- \* Inattentive drivers. While driving, please focus only on the road. If you need to attend to another matter while driving (cell phones, kids, application of cosmetics, etc.) safely pull over in a parking lot or rest stop.
- \* Avoid aggressive drivers and driving aggressively. Speeding, running red lights and stop signs, making frequent lane changes and tailgating can create dangerous and potentially fatal situations on the road.
- \* Avoid squeeze play. Be careful of trucks and buses making wide right turns. If you try to get in between the truck and the curb, you could be caught in a squeeze and suffer a serious accident.
- \* Never drink and drive!

#### Motorcycle Drivers

- \* Watch the "No-Zones". Never hang out in a truck's blind spot or "No-Zone".
- \* Always wear a helmet!
- \* Drive to survive! Motorcycles are the smallest vehicles on the road and offer no protection in a crash. Be cautious, pay attention to the signals and brakes of other vehicles, especially trucks!
- \* Check yourself and your bike. Conduct a safety inspection of your motorcycle before each ride and be sure to wear the proper protective gear.
- \* Watch your speed!

## Pedestrians

- \* Watch your walkways. Walk on sidewalks and in crosswalks whenever possible. Pay attention to walk signals and keep a safe distance when standing on corners.
- \* Know your "No Zones". Be aware of blind spots around trucks, buses and cars when walking near and around them.
- \* Stopping Distances. Use caution when crossing intersections and streets. You may think vehicles will stop for you, but they may not see you or even be able to stop. Never take a chance with a truck, even if the driver sees you, they may not be able to stop. Truck brakes and gears are notorious for sticking.
- \* Make Yourself Visible. Wear bright or reflective clothing.
- \* Watch out for wide loads. Trucks with wide loads may have very limited visibility as well as difficulty maneuvering.

## Truck and Bus Drivers

- \* Take care of yourself! The most important part of a moving truck or bus is the driver. Get plenty of rest before getting behind the wheel, eat well and stay fit!
- \* Always maintain your vehicle
- \* Be aware of your "No-Zone"! The "No-Zone" represents the danger areas, or blind spots, around trucks and buses where crashes are more likely to occur. Be vigilant in watching out for vehicles in the "No-Zone".
- \* Slow down in work zones!
- \* Always keep your distance - leave enough space between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- \* Fasten your seatbelt. Buckle up for safety and control.
- \* Always drive defensively and AVOID aggressive drivers!
- \* Work to help yourselves. Help stranded motorists, notify traffic safety agencies of crashes, unsafe road conditions and other situations that can lead to crashes.

## Bicyclists

- \* Wear your helmet!
- \* Bikers Beware. Always be aware of the traffic around you. Never assume that all drivers see you. Ride defensively.
- \* Check your brakes and be prepared to stop.
- \* Ride with traffic. Ride on the right side, with the flow of traffic.
- \* Beware of the "No-Zone". Never sneak in between a truck or bus and the curb, or you could get crushed. Be aware that large trucks have blind spots in the front, back and on the sides, which make it difficult for the driver to see around them.

## Halloween Safety from the National Safety Council



Halloween is a cherished tradition but the excitement of the night can cause children to forget to be careful. There is no real "trick" to making Halloween a real treat for the entire family. The major dangers are not from witches or spirits but rather from falls and pedestrian/car crashes. Many communities officially designate a "Beggars' Night" and assign specific hours for trick-or-treat activities.

Both children and adults need to think about safety on this annual day of make-believe.  
Motorists

The National Safety Council urges motorists to be especially alert on Halloween.

- \* Watch for children darting out from between parked cars.
- \* Watch for children walking on roadways, medians and curbs.
- \* Enter and exit driveways and alleys carefully.
- \* At twilight and later in the evening, watch for children in dark clothing.

## Parents



Before children start out on their "trick or treat" rounds, parents should:

- \* Make sure that an adult or an older responsible youth will be supervising the outing for children under age 12.
- \* Plan and discuss the route trick-or-treaters intend to follow. Know the names of older children's companions.
- \* Instruct your children to travel only in familiar areas and along an established route.
- \* Teach your children to stop only at houses or apartment buildings that are well-lit and never to enter a stranger's home.
- \* Establish a return time.
- \* Tell your youngsters not to eat any treat until they return home.
- \* Review all appropriate trick-or-treat safety precautions, including pedestrian/traffic safety rules.
- \* Pin a slip of paper with the child's name, address and phone number inside a pocket in case the youngster gets separated from the group.



#### Costume Design

- \* Only fire-retardant materials should be used for costumes.
- \* Costumes should be loose so warm clothes can be worn underneath.
- \* Costumes should not be so long that they are a tripping hazard. (Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injuries on Halloween.)
- \* If children are allowed out after dark, outfits should be made with light colored materials. Strips of retroreflective tape should be used to make children visible.

#### Face Design

- \* Masks can obstruct a child's vision. Use facial make-up instead.
- \* When buying special Halloween makeup, check for packages containing ingredients that are labeled "Made with U.S. Approved Color Additives," "Laboratory Tested," Meets Federal Standards for Cosmetics," or "Non-Toxic." Follow manufacturer's instruction for application.
- \* If masks are worn, they should have nose and mouth openings and large eye holes.

#### Accessories

- \* Knives, swords and other accessories should be made from cardboard or flexible materials. Do not allow children to carry sharp objects.
- \* Bags or sacks carried by youngsters should be light-colored or trimmed with retro-reflective tape if children are allowed out after dark.
- \* Carrying flashlights will help children see better and be seen more clearly.

#### On the way



Children should understand and follow these rules:

- \* Do not enter homes or apartments without adult supervision.
- \* Walk, do not run, from house to house. Do not cross yards and lawns where unseen objects or the uneven terrain can present tripping hazards.
- \* Walk on sidewalks, not in the street.
- \* Walk on the left side of the road, facing traffic if there are no sidewalks.

#### Treats

To ensure a safe trick-or-treat outing, parents are urged to:

- \* Give children an early meal before going out.
- \* Insist that treats be brought home for inspection before anything is eaten.
- \* Wash fruit and slice into small pieces.
- \* When in doubt, throw it out.